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ABSTRACT

In Spring 1991, the LRC (Learning Resources Center)/library at Parkland College (PC) was quantitatively assessed in terms of staff size, collection size, budget allocation, circulation, and space allocation. Adequacy indicators from fiscal year (FY) 1991 and FY90 were compared to those from FY88. In addition, PC's LRC/library was compared to measures averaged from other selected community colleges in Illinois, and to the 1990 Quantitative Standards for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs produced by the American Library Association (ALA). Analysis of the data revealed that: (1) although PC's 1991 LRC/library staff had been reduced by 7.75 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions since 1988, its current FTE was consistent with the average across the state and was greater than the minimum recommended by the ALA; (2) PC's 1991 LRC/library book collection included almost 9,000 more titles than in FY88, more than 30,000 more books than the average for Illinois community colleges, and exceeded the ALA "excellent" rating by almost 15,000 volumes; (3) PC's FY91 library budget allocation, representing 3.4% of the total college operating budget and an increase of 0.2% over FY88, was 0.4% less than the average allocation for the Illinois community colleges, and was below the ALA minimum standard; (4) the college's LRC/library circulation transactions, totaling almost 90,000 in FY90, were almost 30,000 greater than in FY88, amounting to more than two-and-one-half times the average for Illinois community colleges; and (5) as a result of reorganization at PC, the LRC/library had lost over 2,400 assigned square feet, falling 20,000 square feet short of the ALA minimum standard. Overall, PC's LRC/library was performing well, although recent budget cutbacks affecting staffing and materials continued to threaten adequacy. (JMC)

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Parkland College LRC/Library Adequacy

by Alfred Hecht

April 10, 1991

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Parkland College LRC/Library Adequacy

Alfred Hecht

Executive Summary

Is Parkland's LRC/library adequate? According to the data presented in this report, Parkland's long-term investment in LRC/library staff and materials has produced an excellent, well circulated collection that has served students and staff well.

However, recent cut-backs in staff and budget allocations for materials (at a time when the student population is growing and becoming more diverse) threaten LRC/library adequacy. As for most instructional areas, long-term incremental increases in budget allocations will be needed to maintain adequate services.

Report

Is Parkland's LRC/Library adequate? LRC/library adequacy is quantitatively measured in terms of staff size, collection size, budget allocation, circulation, and space allocation. Current Parkland numbers for these indicators were compared with earlier years for Parkland, with selected Illinois Community Colleges, and with the 1990 American Library Association's,(ALA) Quantitative Standards for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs.

Staffing:

Parkland's 1991 LRC/library staff includes 7.75 FTE fewer positions than in 1988, approximately the same number of positions as the average for selected Illinois Community Colleges, and more than the "Minimum" number of total staff recommended by ALA standards.(Table 1).

Comparing staff by position types, shows that Parkland LRC/library has .75 FTE fewer professional positions and two FTE less Technician (Supportive Professional) positions than the ALA "Minimum" standard. (In Table 1, the staff data reported for Selected Illinois Community Colleges includes library staff only.)

Comparing Parkland LRC/library staffing in FY88 and FY91 by position title within position types (Table 2) shows that the professional staff has been reduced by a full-time Acquisitions Librarian, a half-time Reference Librarian, a one-quarter time Technical Services Librarian, and a full-time Media Specialist. Although library automation has reduced the need for a full-time Acquisitions Librarian and a full-time Technical Services Librarian, when feasible, restoring the half-time Reference Librarian and the full-time Media Specialist would return our staffing to the ALA standard for "Excellent" professional staffing and better serve faculty and a growing student population.

According to Table 2, from FY88 to FY91 Supportive Professional staff positions were reduced from seven to three. However, college reorganization transferred the two photographers to other organizational units and library automation has reduced the need for a second full-time Library Technical Assistant. When feasible, adding a half-time media technician in place of the full-time Videographer position would enhance instructional support.

Collection:

Parkland's 1991 book collection includes almost 9000 more titles than in FY88, more than 30,000 more books than the average for selected Illinois Community Colleges, (ranking second only to Harper which has almost twice Parkland's FTE enrollment), and exceeding the ALA standard for "Excellent" by almost 15,000.(Table 1) However, library staff reductions have slowed the normal rate of "weeding" older books from the collection.

Parkland's 1991 collection of films and videotapes includes over 700 more titles than in FY88, about the average for selected Illinois Community Colleges, and almost 500 more than the ALA standard for "Excellent".

Although Parkland's serial(periodical) collection includes 78 fewer titles than in FY88, it ranks first among the selected Illinois Community Colleges, and exceeds by almost 200, the ALA standard for "Excellent".

Table 1 presents a summary of these indicators of adequacy.

Budget Allocation:

Parkland's FY91 library budget allocation of 3.4% of the total college operating budget is a 0.2% increase over FY88, is 0.4% less than the corresponding average allocation for selected Illinois Community Colleges, and is below the ALA "Minimum" standard for LRC/libraries (even when non-library LRC budget allocations are considered). (Table 1)

Library budget allocations were taken from the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Sustem reports rather than from ICCB Unit Cost studies because, over the last several years, our unit cost data has included expenses that should have been allocated to one or more cost centers other than LRC/library. These consistent reporting errors have erroneously inflated Parkland's LRC/library unit costs making impossible accurate unit cost comparisons with other colleges.

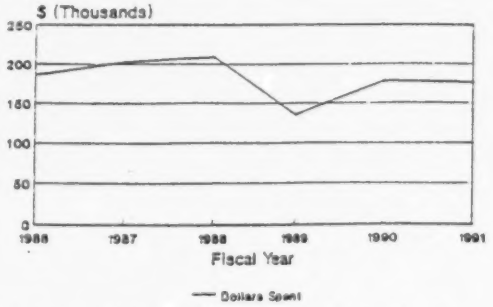
When viewed in light of allocation per FTE student, Parkland's FY91 library allocation of $106.55 is almost $25 less than in FY88, and is more than $30 less than the average for selected Illinois

Community Colleges, ranking lower than all but two other colleges.

Parkland's reduced budget allocations resulted largely from position transfers and reductions, and from reductions in allocations for library materials. Figure 1 shows that these allocations were reduced by almost $75,000 in FY89, as part of the "balanced budget" effort. In addition, about $15,000 was reduced from the student employee allocation and about $10,000 from the supply budget.

Figure 1

College Funding for Library Materials
FY86-FY91



Although some of the FY89 reductions were partially restored in subsequent budgets, an increase of about $25,000 would be needed to restore the library materials allocation to our FY88 level and another $25,000 to restore supply and student employee allocations.

Considering that the cost of library materials is increasing at a rate faster than the C.P.I inflation rate, restoration of budget allocation for library materials to the FY88 level would not permit the collection to grow at the FY88 rate.

Table 3 presents a breakdown of allocations for library materials by category from FY86 through FY91.

Continued incremental increases in LRC/library budget allocations for staff and materials will be required to restore the allocation rate per FTE student to FY88 levels, even larger allocations will be needed to match the average allocation for the selected Ilinois Community Colleges.

Circulation:

Parkland's circulation transactions, totaling almost 90,000 in FY90, were almost 30,000 greater than in FY88 and were more than two and one-half times the number of transactions than the average for selected Illinois Community Colleges (ranking second only to Harper).

Expressed in terms of FTE students, Parkland's record of almost 19 transactions represented an increase of five over FY88, in spite of fewer circulation staff. Parkland's transaction rate was more than twice the average for selected Illinois Community Colleges, ranking first among them.

Table 1 summarizes these indicators of adequacy.

Space Allocation:

As a result of college reorganization, currently the LRC/library has more than 2,400 fewer square feet assigned and 20,000 fewer square feet assigned than the ALA "Minimum" standard. To accomodate a growing and changing student population, in the near future, Parkland will have to address space for collection growth, seating for study and general reading, audiovisual viewing rooms, group study, audiovisual equipment storage space, and a conference/ meeting room. A detailed proposal for these LRC/ library space needs has been presented to the campus Space Allocation Committee for inclusion in the long range college facility development plan.

(See Table 1 for detailed data)

Table 1

Comparative LRC/Library Data

Indicator	Parkland FY88	Parkland FY91	Selected Illinois Community Colleges*	ALA Standards for Community Colleges** Minimum	ALA Standards for Community Colleges** Excellent
Staffing:					
Professionals	7	4.25	5.48	5	7
Technicians	7	3		5	8
Non-Academics	8	7	10.3	4	8
Total Staff	23	15.25	15.78	14	25
Collection:					
Books	90,480	99,029	67,758	60,000	85,000
Films & Videos	1,090	1,775	1,778	750	1,300
Serials	1,070	992	490	500	800
Budget Allocation:					
% of College Operating Budget	3.2	3.4	3.8	6	9
Allocation per FTE Student	131.18	106.55	148.26		
Circulation:					
Annual Circ.	61,426	89,671	33,579		
Transactions per FTE Student	14.5	18.9	7.6		
Space Allocation:					
Square Feet	36,801	34,393		54,640	63,755

* Source: Fall 1990, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System reports for: Harper, Illinois Central, Kankakee, Lakeland, Lincoln Land, Moraine Valley, Oakton, and Richland.

** Association for College and Research Libraries of the American Library Association, Quantitative Standards for Two-Year Learning Resources Programs., 1990. (For FTE enrollment of 3-5000).

Table 2

Parkland LRC/Library Staff, FY88 and FY91

Position Category & Title	FY88	FY91
Administrative:		
Director, LRC/Library	1	1
(Sub-total)	1	1
Professional:		
Archivist	1	1
Acquisitions Librarian	1	0
Reference Librarians	3	2.5
Technical Services Librarian	1	.75
Media Specialist	1	0
(Sub-total)	7	4.25
Supportive Professional:		
Media Technician/AV Specialist	1	1
Graphic Artist	1	1
Library Technical Assistants	2	1
Photographer	2	0
Videographer	1	0
(Sub-total)	7	3
Non-Academic:		
Archivist Assistant	1	0
AV clerk	1	1
Media Services Clerk	1	1
Public Services Clerks	2	2
Technical Services Clerks	2	2
LRC/Library Secretary	1	1
(Sub-total)	8	7
Total LRC/Library Staff	23	15.25
Net loss		7.75

Table 3

PARKLAND COLLEGE FUNDING FOR LIBRARY MATERIALS

	FY86	FY87	FY88	FY89	FY90	FY91
Binding	4,111	7,000	7,000	3,000	3,005	5,105
Public. & Dues	24,696	26,000	29,120	30,500	30,500	29,205
OCLC	17,000	17,000	18,700	14,700	14,700	17,794
Non-Print	32,518	40,000	40,000	20,000	36,000	32,100
AV Films	13,000	14,500	14,500	6,000	-0-	-0-
Books	68,281	70,000	73,500	40,500	73,500	71,500
Serials	23,289	25,000	26,250	20,500	20,500	20,965
Matl. Repl.	3,471	3,500	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
TOTAL	186,366	203,000	209,070	135,200	178,205	176,489

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